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The HIDDEN HAND IN POLITICS

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**This Pamphlet is an exposure of the
secret forces at work in Diplomacy
which lead nations into War.**

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The Hidden Hand in Politics.

I.

If after I am dead
On goes the same old game,
With monarchs seeing red
And Ministers a flame,
And nations drowning deep
In quarrels not their own,
And peoples called to reap
The woes they have not sown;
If all we who are slain
Have died, despite our hope,
Only to twist again
The old kaleidoscope—
Why, then, by God! we're sold!
Cheated and wronged! betrayed!

—From “A Soldier's Testament,” by E. C. Williams.

IN future there must be peace or annihilation! Annihilation swift and sure! Given the necessary period which must ensue before the next war is fully prepared, the chemists and engineers will have provided their several States with an equipment capable of annihilating not only the opposing armies in the field, but the whole civil population which feed, clothe, and equip those armies.

It was doubtless a vision of this which caused the soldier to clench his teeth and cry out “Never again!” With the memory of the shrieking horror from which the world has just emerged indelibly stamped on their memories, the peoples of the whole earth join in that cry, which is as much a prayer as a battle cry. Never again!

The most universal desire in the world to-day—a desire so acute as to amount to pain—is that war shall never again curse the peoples of the earth. For four years and a half British manhood was taught that all that was needed to accomplish their desire was to freely give their lives in war. They heard this and believed, and gave their lives.

For four years and a half they endured a tornado of agony more fierce than hell itself could create. And in so far as their desires were articulate, they were expressed in the two words “Never again!” They wished to free the world from the curse of militarism and war. Their pastors and masters said if they would but win the war all other things would be added unto them! and, believing these pastors and masters, they fought and won the war. But what of the end thereof?

“A wonderful and horrible thing has come to pass in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?”

The test of the war lies in what it has accomplished. The men who endured it did so for the purpose of ridding the world of war and its vicious handmaiden—militarism. Has the war accomplished

that? If it has not it has failed, and whatever memorials may be erected to those who have fallen they will be but a mockery of their sacrifice if the raucous voices of the war-makers still penetrate the tombs of the silent dead. The only worthy tribute we can pay to those who endured and fell is to cleanse the world as they hoped their great sacrifice might help to cleanse it, cleanse it of the curse of militarism and war.

The war has been won, but what has the victory accomplished? The war, we were told, had to be fought to conquer militarism! And we have conquered, but what of militarism? The war, so we were told, had to be fought in order to end war! And we have conquered, but has war been ended? The war, we were told, had to be fought to defend our freedom! And we have conquered, but what of our freedom?

We entered the war as freemen; we emerge as conquerors—and conscripts. We emerge from the war so militarised that our first peace army estimates are fifteen times higher than they were before we had conquered militarism.*

And so far are we from ending war that, four months after the war has closed with the enemy powers utterly vanquished, the Secretary of State for War asks for the development of "a new class of officers who will make all war their province."†

The test of the war consists in what it has accomplished! It has not accomplished one single thing for which the people fought! Militarism has not been destroyed! It has merely been transferred from Germany to Britain. War has not been destroyed! We are to set up, and pay for, a new priesthood. A "new class of officers" who are to make themselves high priests of Mars, "who will make all war their province," so as to guide us to a more effective worship of the gods of war.

Was the indescribable agony of Flanders endured for this? Are the mangled bodies of men, and the broken hearts of women, to have no greater recompense? Are we who still live to stand by whilst a handful of blood-drunk militarists transport the altar stones of war from the countries which have been conquered and re-erect them on the hearths of the men who fell in conquering them?

Surely not! The only honest tribute we can pay to them is to strive with all our power to make the world what they desired it to be—a world freed from war.

II.

How can we end war and establish a permanent peace? Merely winning a war will not do that! The Allies have just won the greatest war of all history, and they are now preparing for the next war!

If winning war would end war, war would have been ended long ago. According to M. Valbert, the various peoples of the earth have fought and won not less than 8,000 wars since 1500 B.C., and not one of them, nor all of them, put an end to war. Why?

* Army Estimates 1913-14 were £28,220,000.
Army Estimates 1919, £440,000,000.

† Winston Churchill, House of Commons, March 3rd, 1919.

Is it possible to put an end to war by waging war? Surely it would be as reasonable to try to put an end to burglary by burglary, or to murder by murder. If war is ever to be ended it will not be done by fighting or even winning a war after it has broken out, **but by preventing it from breaking out.**

To do that the people must transfer their attention from battle-fields where wars are merely fought, to the places **where wars are made.** For, strange as it may seem, wars are not made on battle-fields; they are only fought there.

Wars are made in much more comfortable and safer places than battlefields, and, stranger still though it may seem, wars are not made by soldiers; they only fight and endure them after they have been made. Wars are made in the Foreign Offices of the various Governments by small groups of men who control the relations of the peoples of the earth.

When they say we must love each other we do so, and there is peace; when they say we must hate and slaughter each other we do so, and there is war. No one else, neither people nor Parliament, have anything to do with the making of war. The diplomats, who work in the dark, make the wars.

The people are mere pawns and playthings, moved about by their hidden hands. The agony the people endure has no higher purpose than the schemes which the diplomats hatch in the dark, and dare not discuss in the light of day. The diplomats are the deadliest enemies of all mankind, for they make the wars which plunge mankind into Hell, and they work with hidden hands. The Foreign Offices in which they work are the hatching grounds of war. It is to these the people must divert their attention if they would rid the world of war.

Winning war never has, and never can, end war. **War can only be ended by preventing it from occurring.** To do this we must be something more than obedient pawns awaiting the command to march to any war the hidden hand may make. **It is the making of war that matters, not the fighting of them.** Up to the present the people have been considered so utterly inferior that they have not only never been consulted about the making of war, they have been denied even the knowledge that wars were being made for them. Their business is merely to fight the wars whenever they are so commanded, and ask no questions. From amongst the host of witnesses to this truth let us take the following:

But when you come to our Foreign policy, you are no longer Englishmen; you are no longer free; you are recommended not to enquire. If you do, you are told you cannot understand it; you are snubbed, you are hustled aside. We are told that the matter is too deep for common understandings like ours—that there is great mystery about it . . . in the innermost recesses of it (the Foreign Office) we find some miserable intrigue, in defence of which your fleets are traversing every ocean, your armies are perishing in every clime, and the precious blood of our country's children is squandered as though it had no price. —*John Bright at Glasgow, December, 1858.*

You and your friends complain of a secret diplomacy and that wars are entered into without consulting the people. Now it is in the Cabinet alone that questions of foreign policy are settled. We never consult Parliament until after they are settled.

—*Lord Palmerston to Cobden. See Morley's "Life of Cobden," p. 695.*

If we attempt discussion before war breaks out we are hampering the Government in negotiations and endangering peace. If we wait till the war is upon us, then it is said that in an unpatriotic way we are dividing the country in the presence of the enemy; while, if we postpone discussion until the war is over, we are told that we are guilty of futile fault-finding and unnecessary retrospection. The thing, in fact, comes to this—that it is not the business of the House of Commons or the people to express an opinion on foreign affairs.

—*Joseph Chamberlain, House of Commons, December 9th, 1878.*

Have the people any quarrel? Busy as the devil is, not the smallest . . . their Governors had fallen out!

—*Carlyle.*

Who, then, makes war? The answer is to be found in the Chancelleries of Europe, among the men who have too long played with human lives as pawns in a game of chess, who have become so emmeshed in formulas and the jargon of diplomacy that they have ceased to be conscious of the poignant realities with which they trifle.

—“*The Times*,” November 23rd, 1912.

. . . What is seen on the stage of foreign policy is but a small part of the whole. By far the greater portion is what takes place behind the scenes, and as we ordinary mortals are not admitted behind the scenes, not even to the door of the green room, our knowledge of foreign policy must be based mainly on speculation . . . I do not know if any Glasgow merchant here would care particularly to do what we do in foreign affairs—that is to engage in vast and unknown liabilities and affix his signature to them without knowing their nature and extent! —*Lord Rosebery at Glasgow, January 13th, 1912.*

In no country is there any effective control by the people over foreign policy . . . The country has no real choice, for it only gets its information after the decisive action has been taken.

—*Prof. Lowes Dickenson in “The War and the Way Out.”*

We do not know what sort of children our grandchildren will be, but if they are at all like ourselves they will recall with astonishment how we went to war in 1914 without passion, or hatred, or malice—how between two and three hundred millions of people set out to slaughter each other in a fatalistic way merely because the diplomats had arranged things so. —“*The Standard*,” August 3rd, 1914.

The masses of the people have no quarrel . . . But they have nothing to do with it . . . even while John and Hans kneel together in worship of peace the lamps may be suddenly extinguished and their altars overturned. The sacred incense which sent rolling up its pious perfumes and sweet savours may be exchanged in an instant for the hellish reek of blood and battle and their beautiful house of prayer with a den of thieves and murderers.

The masses are powerless to foresee—much less to avert the peril. They never know and never can know where and when the thunderbolt of War may fall. To all practical effect in this devilish broil they are deaf and blind and handcuffed. For they have allowed the world to slip from their grasp into the power of wolves and vultures. Their only remaining right in international relationship is the right to be used as clubs for the mutual battering of their own thick skulls, what time the wolves and vultures flourish “unhurt amidst the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.”

—*Alex. M. Thompson in “Patriotism and Conscription.”*

The people have nothing whatever to do with the **making** of wars. Their business is merely to fight and endure them **after** they have been made. They are merely pawns, to be moved about on a board by hidden hands. “Their only remaining right in international relationships is the right to be used as clubs for the mutual battering of (each others) skulls.”

III.

Well, what can we do about it? Obviously we must win the power to control the **making** of wars, which means the power to control the Foreign Office. The people already have the power to control every other governing department. The Home Office, the Board of Education, the Board of Trade, the Board of Agriculture, the Local Government Board, even the War Office and the Admiralty are subordinate to the authority of Parliament.

None of them can legislate without the consent of Parliament. It matters not on how trifling a matter they may desire to legislate, they must come to Parliament with their proposals, assemble their arguments and evidence to show that their proposals are for the benefit of the State, and if by so doing they can win the consent of Parliament their proposals become law. But by no other means can they become law.

That applies to all the Home departments. But none of these make war, not even the War Office and Admiralty. These two departments merely obey orders. They conduct the operations of war when ordered to do so, and when ordered to cease such operations they cease. The other departments mentioned have nothing whatever to do with affairs outside our shores. Their business is strictly confined to our own country.

The making of war against, and the making of peace with other countries, is in the hands of the Foreign Office. The conduct of all our relations with the other peoples of the earth is the business of the Foreign Office. And the Foreign Office is in an entirely different position from every other governing department. Whilst all the others are subordinate to Parliament, the Foreign Office is supreme in its authority above Parliament. Whilst all the other Departments must come to Parliament for all their legislative Powers, the Foreign Office contemptuously snaps its fingers at Parliament, and involves us in whatever obligations it pleases.

It ranges itself the whole world over. It enters into treaties, undertakings, understandings, with any King, or Czar, or Shah, or Government it pleases for any purpose it pleases. It involves the country in obligations calling for the expenditure of millions of men's lives and uncountable millions of treasure, and so far from consulting Parliament about these things, or winning the consent of Parliament for such undertakings, it even refuses to inform Parliament when asked to do so. Enquiries are invariably stifled by evasive, deceitful, and often positively untruthful replies.*

As a matter of fact Parliament has no right to be consulted or even to be informed about these matters. The entire and absolute authority over the issues of peace and war are in the hands of the

*March 10th, 1913, Lord Hugh Cecil in the House of Commons: There is a very general belief that this country is under an obligation, not a treaty obligation, but an obligation arising owing to an assurance given by the Ministry in the course of diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe.
... Mr. Asquith: *I ought to say that it is not true.*—(Similar denials by Mr. Asquith on March 24th, 1913, and by Sir Edward Grey in April and June, 1914.)

Lord French's book on the war reviewed in the Press, April 29th, 1919:—The British and French General Staffs had for some years been

Foreign Office. The Foreign Office alone, without reference to the people, without reference even to Parliament, controls the whole of our relations with all the other peoples of the earth, and whether its conduct be good or bad, and whether its consequences be peace or war, no one outside the Foreign Office, not even the people's Parliament, has the right to be consulted, or even to be informed.

The Foreign Office is the last remaining citadel of aristocratic privilege in this country. It secretly and autocratically juggles with the lives and treasure of our whole population, and, great as are our democratic powers, we have no power to check its adventures, or even to know in what they consist. Our only function is to provide cannon-food when cannon-food is called for, and, when it is no longer needed, to humbly and gratefully return to our several callings and ask no questions. That is a position democracy must realise and reform, otherwise it may fight and win war to the crack of doom and still peace would not abide. It is the **making** of wars democracy must concern itself about. All wars are made by hands which are hidden from the public view—hidden in the secret chambers of the Foreign Office. The people merely **fight** the wars after they are made.

Let us call for evidence to witness to this truth:—

As things stand at present a British citizen, domiciled in the British Isles, as represented in the British Parliament, has no control whatever over foreign policy.

It is no exaggeration to say that at the present time in the declaring of war and the making of peace, in the treaty making power and, speaking generally, in the direction of the foreign policy of the country, Parliament has no effective control.

If this statement in relation to the want of Parliamentary control over foreign affairs, founded on unquestionable authorities on constitutional law, history, and practice, be correct, it is quite clear that in Parliament there are no treaty-making powers.

These powers rest with the Foreign Office, and for practical purposes, so far as foreign politics are concerned, Parliament need not exist.

—*J. G. Swift MacNeill in "Parliament and Foreign Policy."*

We (the people of Britain) are almost as much at the mercy of two men, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, so far as foreign policy is concerned, as if we were the inhabitants of a continental monarchy whose foreign affairs are personally directed by a quasi-autocratic Emperor or a Chancellor not responsible to Parliament.

—*Mr. Sidney Low.*

in close secret consultation with one another on this subject. (The point of concentration for the British Forces on their arrival in France.) The area of concentration for the British forces had been fixed on the left flank of the French, and the actual detraining stations of the various units were all laid down in terrain lying between Maubeuge and Le Cateau. The headquarters of the army were fixed at the latter place.

Also see letter in daily press, April 8th, 1919, from Marshal Foch, in which he states he co-operated with General Sir Henry Wilson "long before the war" in preparation for it.

As things now are the Government, that is the Cabinet, that is the Foreign Secretary, that is a Senior Clerk—can decide for the whole Empire issues involving the prosperity or poverty, the life or death of each of us, and the honour or disgrace, the unity or discord of the Empire, and that, moreover, without any power of revision by, even without reference to, the public opinion of England, still less that of the Empire. The Cabinet is supposed to be informed, but frequently is not, and rarely is called on for a decision. The House of Commons is not supposed to be informed and rarely gets even the opportunity for discussion. Foreign Secretaries mostly sit in the House of Lords, and, especially of late, have frankly and forcibly contended that foreign affairs are matters of exclusively executive concern.

—George Young, M.V.O., late First Secretary of Legation for 25 years in the Diplomatic Service.

The great danger of England is the Foreign Office.

—“Candid Review,” November, 1915.

There stands revealed the place wherein wars are made. To be rid of war democracy must banish the dark-hand diplomats, and establish its complete authority in the Foreign Office as in all other governing departments. Secret and autocratic diplomacy must go! Just as all home governing departments have to submit to the authority of Parliament, so, in future, must the Foreign Office. No treaty or undertaking of any kind must be entered upon in the name of Britain without the sanction of Parliament.

If the world is ever to be made safe for democracy, democracy must take charge of the world. To win control over their foreign affairs is the people's next stride forward. On that depends the future peace of the world. With Professor Carruth, of the Stanford University, they must say to all the diplomats throughout the world:

Your game is played;
You and your works are weighed;
We have tracked the dragon to his den
Who battens on the bones of men.
Your day of dominance is done:
We see not all the onward path,
Strands of the ancient snare
Still lie about our feet.
But with wide eyes and in our solemn wrath
Before the face of God we swear
As life is good and sweet,
Under the sun,
This horror shall not come again,
Never, never again
Shall twenty million men,
Nor twenty, no, nor ten,
Leave all God gave them in
The hands of one—
Leave the decision over Peace and War
To King or Kaiser, diplomat or Tsar!

The long-suffering masses of the world, upon whom the sweat and agony of war chiefly descends, must become the architects of their own destiny, and with their own hands design and construct the temple of peace in which the peoples of all lands may dwell in peace and amity in the years that are to be.



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